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JORDAN-FEDAYEEN: King Husayn commuted the death sentences yesterday of Black September leader Muhammad Awadh (Abu Daud) and 16 of his followers.

Husayn said that he had issued the order in the hope that it would, in effect, bring about a new understanding between Jordan and the rest of the Arab states as well as the fedayeen.

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The move is almost certain to win King Husayn the gratitude of other Arab leaders, many of whom appealed to him not to execute Awadh. Whether the step will assuage fedayeen animosity toward the King is much more doubtful, but it could place at least a temporary restraint on terrorist operations against Jordan.

Husayn's leniency could make it more difficult for Sudan President Numayri to deal harshly with the Khartoum terrorists. Many foreign observers in Sudan believe Numayri will be forced to soften his hard-nosed attitude toward the terrorists. Sudan, however, is much less sensitive to events in the Arab world than Jordan. Moreover, Numayri has had a tendency to dig in his heels in the face of outside pressure once he has made up his mind. In the case of the Khartoum murders, one Sudanese cabinet minister told the US Embassy in Sudan yesterday--before Husayn's announcement--that Numayri was determined to pursue "justice" and was in favor of "severe punishment" for the eight Black September commandos.

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TUNISIA: President Bourguiba has proposed constitutional reforms that hold out the possibility for reconciliation with the disaffected liberal faction of the governing Destourian Socialist Party (PSD).

In a long-awaited speech to the National Assembly, Bourguiba announced a major concession on the important succession issue. He proposed that a successor president be elected by popular vote within 45 days after the incumbent's death, with the prime minister assuming interim powers. Bourguiba had previously refused to alter the existing provision that the prime minister, who is appointed by the president, take over the presidency if the incumbent dies before the end of the five-year term.

Bourguiba also accepted proposals for increasing the powers of the National Assembly. The proposed change would make the government responsible to the assembly as well as to the president by giving the assembly qualified power to vote a motion of censure. If two censure motions are passed within one session, however, the president could dissolve the assembly and order new elections. In addition, Bourguiba offered a new proposal providing for the holding of popular referenda on important issues as a means of enhancing dialogue between the president and the people.

The proposals go far toward implementing the resolutions adopted by the PSD congress in 1971. The resolutions largely supported the liberal platform calling for liberalization of the system of government, but Bourguiba, backed by the party's conservatives, blocked the reforms, viewing them as a diminution of his personal authority. Most liberals were then purged from party and government posts and have since rejected overtures to rejoin the government in the absence of any serious

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offers of compromise from Bourguiba. The split had added an element of uncertainty to the prospects for an orderly succession to the post-Bourguiba era and contributed to a decline in the influence of the PSD.

The liberals must now decide whether the new proposals satisfy their demands enough to allow a rapprochement with Bourguiba. They had wanted even more power for the National Assembly and wanted the assembly president, rather than Bourguiba's hand-picked prime minister, to serve as interim president pending new elections. Bourguiba's improved health will no doubt influence their decision. The liberals were biding their time in the expectation of scoring gains after his death, but he has recently shown surprising vitality.

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PAKISTAN: President Bhutto's efforts to replace the opposition-controlled governments of the two frontier provinces have borne little fruit.

On 15 February, Bhutto dismissed the governors of Baluchistan and the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP). He also dismissed the provincial government and imposed a month of central rule in Baluchistan. The government of the NWFP then resigned in protest.

The coalition governments in both provinces had been dominated by a political party that has generally opposed Bhutto, particularly his efforts to limit provincial autonomy. Bhutto's actions against the provincial governments followed a campaign to discredit the party by claiming it plotted the breakup of Pakistan and was the intended recipient of the arms discovered in the Iraqi Embassy in Islamabad on 10 February.

In Baluchistan, Bhutto's supporters have won away some of the supporters of the former ruling coalition. The coalition still appears to have the support of 11 or 12 of the 21 provincial assemblymen, however, and the period of central rule will probably be extended. In the NWFP, local objections may have forced Bhutto to give up on his first choice for chief minister, but, even so, it will be difficult to form a pro-Bhutto majority.

There is still room for compromise and political deals in both provinces, and the widespread violence some officials had feared has not taken place.

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NOTES

25X1 TURKEY: Further presidential balloting by parliament has been postponed until 16 March. The 48-hour delay presumably is intended to give the politicians and generals an opportunity to search for a way to resolve the impasse that developed on 13 March when no candidate got the required majority after four ballots. There is speculation in the Turkish press that party leaders are trying to come up with a new candidate who would be acceptable to both the parliament and the military high command. [REDACTED]

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25X1 BANGLADESH: Dacca has admitted that progress toward economic recovery has been disappointing and has appealed for large amounts of additional foreign aid. Since independence, urban prices have doubled while per capita income is now 16 percent below the pre-war level. The poor economic situation is blamed on last summer's drought and the economic disruptions resulting from the severance of ties with Pakistan. The Planning Commission estimates that \$825 million in new aid is needed for the 18-month period ending June 1974. During 1972, \$1.27 billion in foreign aid was committed, more than 80 percent by members of the World Bank who have been invited to meet in Dacca on 31 March to consider the new requests for assistance. [REDACTED]

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DENMARK-NATO: The NATO Defense Planning Committee has asked Denmark to reconsider its proposed defense cutback, which is awaiting final approval in parliament. NATO avoided a harsh tone, however, lest it upset the Danish political compromise that produced defense reductions less drastic than those originally proposed. The Danish representative at NATO discouraged any hope that Copenhagen might back down further from its reduction plans. The NATO report is intended primarily to discourage parliaments in other NATO countries from pressing for unilateral defense reductions.

[REDACTED]

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USSR-PERU: A Soviet military delegation headed by Deputy Defense Minister Sokolov is in Peru this week to negotiate sales of Soviet equipment. Peru appears to be most interested at present in T-54 tanks. Its top-level military officers, including General Edgardo Mercado, who is now prime minister, have inspected many other types of Soviet hardware during visits to the USSR and Cuba. The Peruvians have often told the US that its suspensions of military sales--resulting from fishing disputes--are making it an unreliable supplier and they have alleged that other free world suppliers have not matched the credit terms offered by the USSR.

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PAKISTAN: Islamabad is seeking foreign assistance to make up a projected balance-of-payments deficit of roughly \$650 million for the fiscal year beginning 1 July 1973. Pakistan's goal for project and commodity aid disbursements is approximately \$455 million, only slightly above what will be received in the current fiscal year. In addition, Pakistan is seeking about \$190 million in debt relief, which is \$69 million higher than that provided during this fiscal year. To achieve this, Islamabad hopes to get its major creditors to agree to a long-term rescheduling of its debts and an elimination of its obligation to service debts accrued in its eastern wing, now Bangladesh.

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